



State of Wisconsin
GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

August 3, 2018 – Teleconference Option

Public Participation
Sturgeon Bay Library
Sturgeon Bay, WI

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

State Trails Council Members present

Bryan Much, off-highway motorcycle representative (member of *Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association (WOHMA)*) [STC Chair]
Ken Neitzke, hiking representative (member of the *Ice Age Trail Alliance*) [STC Vice Chair]
John Siegert, off-road bicycling representative (member of *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*)
Luana Schneider, 4-wheel drive vehicles representative (member of *Wisconsin 4-Wheel Drive Association*)
Kricket Jewett, equestrian representative (member of *Wisconsin Horse Council*)
Randy Harden, ATV/UTV representative (member of *Wisconsin ATV-UTV Association (WATVA)*)

State Trails Council Members not in attendance

Doug Johnson, snowmobiling representative (member of *Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC)*) [STC Secretary]
Ben Popp, cross-country skiing representative (Executive Director of American Birkebeiner)
John Siegert, off-road bicycling representative (member of *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*)
Bob Fasick, tourism/business representative [non-voting]
Leif Hubbard, *Wisconsin Department of Transportation* [non-voting]

Invited speakers

Jason Manders (Trail Genius)
Bobbi Winebar (DNR)
Erin Brown-Stender (DNR)
Ben Nelson (Door County)

Others present

Hank Wozniel
Allan Stenmark
Helen Wagner
Krista Lutzke
Katie Moore
Amanda Manders

WI DNR Staff present

Kathryn Gehrke



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10:00 A.M. – Welcome and introductions

- Much called the meeting to order. Council members and guests introduced themselves.

10:04 A.M. – Agenda review/repair and approval of April meeting minutes

- Bryan – motion to approve
- Luana moved to approve the minutes. Ben seconded. Motion passed.
- FY2019 new funding codes, please use new sheet

10:04 A.M. – Chair report

- Next meeting location open for discussion – North County trail tentative to attend
 - November 8
- Applicant status
 - No updates on previous applications. Some to review today.
- Leif left and we prepared a certificate for him
- Make nominations for council chairs, send to Kathryn, reminder will be sent out 30 days prior to next meeting
- Updating of contact list

10:07 A.M. – Application Reviews and Recommendations

- Application for bike touring
 - Any issue on this application or recommendation
 - Randy recommend, Luana second, motion passed.
- 3:00 discussion on radio about LE back in Parks

10:10 A.M. – Trail Genius, Jason Manders

- Ben Popp uses trail genius for Berkie
- Trail Genius specialty is interactive and experiential media
 - Millennials are experience driven and account for 60% travelers, plan online
 - Trail Genius aims to educate people prior to traveling so they are more satisfied with their experience
 - 85% millennials check multiple sites before traveling, 97% post while traveling, 75% post once a day – free advertising for your user group
 - 86% of millennials are disappointed on the lack of mobile resources
- Signage in the field is not consistent in coloring, design and location along trail and does not always match what user first saw online
 - Consistency in maps between online and in person/print is hugely important
- Bob F. – can this relate to those who might still want a paper map?
 - Jason – paper map is still key, lots of places where you are in field and will not have service. I think there is just a huge need for them to look the same as they did online when you first saw that trail.
 - Luana – I enjoy printing a map so I can write notes on the map so I remember what things look like and how the trail is



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- Technology that is helping create a better travel experience
 - Interactive map
 - Aerial photos & videos with drones
 - 360 videography
 - 360 photo
 - Custom tours
 - Time-lapse video
- Map can be much more interactive than traditionally thought
- Example of Rock Island State Park, use link: <http://bit.ly/trailgenius-traildemo>
 - Overlay of printed map with actual trail data shows some major differences
- Bob – is there a certain time of year these photos should be taken?
 - Jason – the most traveled time of year, but if you have a full summer and winter experience then I would recommend you do both
- Ken – how long on site did it take you to do Rock Island SP?
 - Jason – we were on site for 3 or 4 days
- Showing start of Berkie, use link: <http://bit.ly/trailgenius-eventdemo>
 - It is important to know what you're getting into before showing up to Berkie
- Washington Island Campground, use link: <http://bit.ly/trailgenius-camptour>
 - Custom tour we made for them to show the different campsites and features of campground
 - Walkable tour of lodge on campground
- Amanda and I went to Newport this week and got into site 16 (one year in advance) and had no idea what we were getting into – it was amazing but would have been better if we knew ahead we had a metal box for food and stumps to sit on
- On the site you can search by type of activity or location to see different experiences and trail types
- Half of what Trail Genius does is events, to help promote
- We can also do paper maps, and we do so with real GPS data
 - Huge need for GPS data to be accurate since everyone has their own device
- Trail closures are easy to add in online but there still is a need for field posting for locals who don't look online prior to using trails

11:20 A.M. – Lunch

12:00 PM – Door County Parks, Erin Brown-Stender and Ben Nelson

DNR Master Planning Update Door County Parks

- Master Planning
 - Master Planning for the Northern Lake Michigan Coastal Region is just wrapping up.
 - The Northern Lake Michigan Coastal Region includes State Parks, Wildlife Areas, Fishery Areas and other DNR lands in parts of Door, Oconto, Marinette, and Shawano Counties.
 - The plan goes to the Natural Resources Board for approval on August 8.
 - I'll be talking about some of the proposed trail related changes included in the new master plan.
- State Parks in Door County



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- Rock Island – north of Washington Island
- Newport – Ellison Bay
- Peninsula – Fish Creek
- Whitefish Dunes – north of Sturgeon Bay
- Potawatomi – south/west of Sturgeon Bay
- Trails in Door County State Parks (current stats / by the numbers)
 - About 70 miles of hiking trail
 - Over 40 miles of bike trail – mostly off-road
 - Over 50 miles of cross-country ski trail
 - About 25 miles of snowmobile trail, operated and maintained through agreements with local Snowmobile Clubs
 - Over 15 miles of winter hiking and snowshoe trails
- Peninsula State Park
 - 1st Slide:
 - One of Wisconsin's first state parks, and the oldest in Door County
 - Considered one of Wisconsin's most complete state parks with its wide array of recreational opportunities
 - One of the most visited state parks in Wisconsin
 - Over 30 total trail miles
 - About 15 miles of hiking trail
 - About 20 miles of biking trail
 - 16 miles of cross-country ski trail
 - Over 5 miles of snowshoe trail
 - 17 miles of snowmobile trail
 - 2nd Slide:
 - Project recently completed to address safety concerns at mile marker 2. Included:
 - Tree removal to improve sight lines
 - Signage
 - Address grade and improved trail surfacing
 - Upcoming project to:
 - Repair and resurface sections of the trail
 - Reroute identified unsafe road crossings
 - Replace signage and add informational kiosks
 - 3rd Slide:
 - Recreation Objectives:
 - Provide a system of recreational trails, where uses include hiking, mountain biking, bike touring, horseback riding, cross-country skiing (classic and skate), snowmobiling, and snowshoeing.
 - Redesign the park's trail system to improve the visitor's experience and trail sustainability. Equestrian and fat tire (winter) biking will be additional allowed uses when the trail system is redesigned.
 - Long-term Prescription:
 - Trail redesign to create a more efficient and sustainable trail system



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- The Department will hire a consultant to establish trail design standards for the park
- Support facilities will be improved as needed to serve the redesigned trail system.
- DNR will work with the DOT, local government and other partners to install a multi-use, non-motorized trail parallel to State Highway 42 to connect the park to Fish Creek to the south and Ephraim to the north.
- Potawatomi State Park
 - 1st Slide:
 - Most southerly of the state parks in Door County --- is the gateway to Door County
 - Popular family camping, fishing, and boating destination
 - Features the Eastern Terminus of the Ice Age Trail, a state and national scenic trail that traverses the state of WI.
 - 9 miles of hiking trail, 8 miles of off-road bike trail , about 8 miles each of cross-country ski and snowmobile trail, 2.5 miles of snowshoe trail
 - 2nd Slide:
 - Recreation Objective:
 - Provide a system of recreational trails to include snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and winter/fat tire biking, hiking, and biking, as well as the eastern end of the Ice Age Trail
 - Redesign the park's trail system to improve the visitor's experience and trail sustainability.
 - Long-term Prescriptions:
 - Trail redesign to create a more efficient and sustainable trail system
 - The Department will hire a consultant to establish trail design standards for the park
 - Support facilities will be improved as needed to serve the redesigned trail system.
- Whitefish Dunes State Park
 - 1st Slide:
 - Features a mile-long sandy beach on Lake Michigan, and 2 miles of rocky shoreline
 - Cave Point County Park is embedded within the northern section of Whitefish Dunes State Park
 - Almost 11 miles of trail in the park for hiking – some sections allow biking
 - About 7 miles of groomed ski trail, plus about 3 miles of ungroomed trail for hiking or snowshoeing
 - 2nd Slide:
 - Recreation Objective: Provide a system of non-motorized recreational trails.
 - Long-term Prescription:
 - Designate a trail, 4 to 6 feet wide, to serve as a direct connection between the Whitefish Dunes beach and day use area and Cave Point. The trail will run parallel to Schauer Road.



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- Develop one to three miles of snowshoe trail near Whitefish Bay Creek, with the western parking lot serving as trailhead.
- Newport State Park
 - 1st Slide:
 - The park was established to preserve the natural scenic beauty and wild, undeveloped character of the land
 - Newport was designated an International Dark Sky Park in 2017
 - 24 miles of hiking trail, 16 miles also allows biking
 - All trails are open for cross-country skiing, and 5 miles of trail open for snowshoeing
 - 2nd Slide:
 - Recreation Objective: Expand recreational opportunities by adding equestrian trails
 - Long-term Prescription: Work with partners to develop 4 to 6 miles of primitive to lightly developed equestrian trails east of Newport Lane, south of Europe Bay State Natural Area and north of the Park Office. Add/improve facilities to accommodate the new use.
- Rock Island State Park
 - 1st Slide:
 - The state park covers the entirety of the island
 - Island is accessed by personal or chartered watercraft or ferry service
 - Motor vehicles and bikes are not allowed on the island
 - About 11 miles of hiking trail throughout the park
 - The Washington Island snowmobile club has a land use agreement with the DNR to maintain a snowmobile trail on the island in the winter
 - 2nd Slide:
 - Recreation Objective: Provide a system of non-motorized recreational hiking trails by maintaining existing trails
- Ahnapee State Trail
 - Managed through cooperative agreements with local units of government
 - The managing partner (County) conducts the planning process
 - NLMC Master Plan references the 2003 State Trails Network Plan, which identifies Northern Door County as an opportunity or priority corridor to extend the Ahnapee State Trail from Sturgeon Bay to the tip of Door County
 - Intended as a safe, scenic travel alternative to busy roads
 - DNR acknowledges the importance of the extension project and is committed to expanding the trail within the defined corridor

Door County Parks Master Planning Update

- 19 county parks 940 Acres
 - Most parks have shoreline
- Ahnapee State Trail 1994 signed lease agreement with DNR
 - Extension to go entire length of county
 - 0.6 mile extension to be done this month
- Door County Parks approaching 100 years and is beginning to focus on planning next 100 years



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- Updated mission and vision connecting
 - People
 - Nature
 - Leadership
 - Economy
- Main goals of the master plan
 - Connect the broad, long-term goals of the strategic/master plan to operation of the parks
 - Set priorities to ensure limited resources are spent effectively and efficiently
 - Serve as an internal and external communications and management tool for implementing the plan
- How to get involved – please note we are still in the initial phases
 - Advisory committee
 - Public survey
 - Informational meetings
- State Master Plan is almost complete so we hope to fill some gaps the state plan could not accommodate
- Bryan – are you considering more motorized/low speed vehicle trails in Door County
 - Ben – we are looking forward and encourage new ideas
- Bryan – are you considering winter ATV use?
 - Ben – Extending shoulder opportunities is a good idea. I would like to have a park in the system that has those winter opportunities
 - Bryan – yes, snowmobile use is down and ATV is up, I think winter ATV use could fill this gap
- Door County is ranked number 7 in tourism dollars made (in Wisconsin), which is huge for the size and seasonality!
- Bryan – do you see any emerging trends you plan to accommodate?
 - Ben – yes, special events and we hope to partner with private organizations on this
- Bryan – what about underwater parks?
 - Ben – yes that could be a good opportunity to gain different users
- Bryan – any other goals
 - Ben – I hope to use parks as a vehicle for other social responsibilities we have as a county

1:00 P.M. – Trail Standards Project, Brigit Brown

- E-bike law where a classification system is made depending on speed of electric bike, by law they are called motorbikes
- Introduce this project to STC, originally brought to STC about 1 year ago
 - Moving forward with design specification for specific trail uses
- Representative from each user group to create a stakeholder group as we move forward with these standards
 - Next STC meeting please provide a name of someone we can use to represent the interest of their user group
- Luana - Why isn't 4WD a listed use?
 - Brigit - There is not a profile standard for the 4WD vehicle



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- 4WD will plan to get specifications of their vehicles by next year when this project gets started
- Bob – May want to add in clearance for horizontal utilities
 - Brigit – I will add it into #5 to “free of obstacles”
- Finish edits and send out draft in a couple weeks

1:20 P.M. – DNR Report, Missy VanLanduyt and Kathryn Gehrke

- Missy – LE update
 - 120 started with, and unsure at this point how many we will bring back
 - We feel we haven't been meeting needs of customers on both recreation and fishing and hunting sides
 - Funding sustainability hasn't proven to be feasible going forward
 - Integrated approach going forward
 - Going forward reimplementation in next couple years – but starting immediately
 - Plan, do, check, revise throughout alignment and this needed to be revised
- Road inventory will become part of Master Planning Ecological Landscapes
 - Inventoried by open, close, seasonally opened, rustic...
 - We will look into if all of this, will be included in November
 - The hope was that the map would include all 4 types of development
- Maps/road analysis on all properties will be talked about at STC in November
- Master Planning Update:
 - Northern Lake Michigan Coastal Master Plan is going to NRB in August
 - Superior Coastal Plain, Northwest Lowlands, Northwest Sands are about 30% complete
 - Northeast Sands was just started and Western Prairie and Southwest Savanna will be started soon
 - Each plan takes about one year to complete. There is a recreation component and an environmental and habitat component to each plan.
 - You can sign up to receive updates for regions through DNR website search “Master Planning”
- DNR is working with IATA on acquisitions and is partnering with them to do outreach events
- Many mountain bike groups have interest in building new trails on DNR properties and we are working with them to find best locations
- We will be sending staff to the WATV VIP ride in September
- DNR is working with Sam Landis from AWSC on trail maintenance contracts
- Linear and loop trail development continues throughout the state

1:40 P.M. – OutWiGo, Kathryn Gehrke

- OutWiGo is a DNR parks and recreation marketing initiative focused on getting people healthy through being active in Wisconsin State Parks, trails and forests
- OutWiGo launched in May and the initiative will continue into the foreseeable future
 - Goal this year (2018) is to make public aware of this new marketing initiative through social media and get public to sign the pledge at:
<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/outwigo.html>

1:50 P.M. – Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Update, Roberta Winebar



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- \$200,000
 - 16 motorized
 - 7 non-motorized
 - 8 diversified
- Rehabilitation, maintenance,
- Couple weeks for preliminary review
- RTP funding in future
 - Stewardship is up for renewal but haven't heard on RTP funding
 - Where the money comes from may have changed but we do know the amount for next year is same as this year

2:00 P.M. – User Group Highlights, Members

- Ken (Ice Age Trail)
 - Land and Water Conservation funds are up for renewal
 - Huge push to write in and move to approve for renewal
 - Research has been done that Americans day hiking has risen by 22%
 - Looking into how to replace older volunteers with younger generation
- Randy (ATV/UTV)
 - Nothing to add from report
 - Topic of trying to get next generation to volunteers is being integrated into our stewardship program
- Luana (4WD)
 - A lot of people are doing wheeling in other states
 - New association, in addition to other two associations, on 4WD in Wisconsin
- Kricket (Equestrians)
 - Horse Fair was very successful this last year and looking at extra money for grants, sponsorships and
 - "share the trails" is theme of national conference
 - Governor Dodge was pledged \$60,000 to go towards \$1 million campgroup project
- Bryan
 - Trail project in XX county will have event and open in mid- August
 - ATV park in Tigerton has extra land and we will use to build single track motorcycle trail
 - Form a club specific to that project and hope to ride next season
 - Dual Sport events are being sold out in 24hrs and it's an issue for people who have been attending but weren't waiting by their computer
 - Hope some of these single-track trail opportunities will help ease burden from events
- Bob (DOT)
 - Helping folks answer ATV questions and state hwy signage
 - New website and info videos on YouTube in future
 - Kricket – CDL mandate in regards to weight limit and how it effected, Bob will ask someone else

2:20 P.M. – Public comment

- Helen Wagner: Lot of people who are heading out of state for 4WD because Wisconsin doesn't have enough



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- Alan Stenmark: Rails to Trails throughout Wisconsin, crushed limestone isn't consistent, in certain communities it is too big. Example, Ehinsenbound in certain counties it large stone. Would like for more consistency or communication
- Equestrian community is excited DNR is looking into trail development for horses, there are currently none in Door County yet there is a huge equestrian community.

2:35 P.M. – Future agenda topics

- Identify trail spec.for Brigit
- GIS map update
- North Country Trail people
- Road study what gaps and opportunities
- If you'd like to nominate topic or location for the meetings, contact Bryan

2:38 P.M. – Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn by Randy. Seconded by Ken. All approved. Meeting adjourned.

Appendix – User Group Reports (submitted before meeting by Council Members)

STC User Group Reports –

Cross-Country Ski

In general, it was a good winter for skiing, however south of Hwy 29 had very poor snow conditions. Like skiers, ski trails are made in the summer, so lots of work going on around the state. Here are a few updates from the different areas around the state.

Eau Claire Area Ski Trails:

- **Ski trail lighting upgrade and expansion:** A ski trail lighting upgrade and expansion project is underway this summer at Tower Ridge ski area in Eau Claire by the Eau Claire Ski Striders ski club. All the current lights on the ~2.5k of trail are being upgraded to LED, and expansion of the LED lighting will be completed on another 1k of trail. This will provide additional lighted trail for skiers in the evening, more options for evening races and events, and additional room and areas for the Kickin' Kids youth program to utilize for the 150 youth skiers it provides lessons to on Monday evenings in winter at Tower Ridge.
- **Tower Ridge Skills Park:** Organizational planning and preliminary layout plans were started in June for the development of ski "Skills Park" areas at Tower Ridge ski area in Eau Claire. Developed and being constructed in partnership between the Eau Claire Ski Striders and Eau Claire County Parks and Forest, these two areas located close to the parking lot and cabin, are relatively small and compact in area, but big on features – and lighted! They are designed to act as "playgrounds" for developing technical skills of all skiers, as well as additional area for the Kickin' Kids youth ski program to utilize, the Chippewa Valley Nordic Middle and High School team skiers, and will act as a feature for local and regional families and skiers to utilize anytime while visiting and skiing Tower Ridge. The plan is to construct features



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incorporated into a shorter trail – twists, turns, berms, bumps, small jumps, slalom – and adding in some equipment – V-boards, slalom poles, hoops, ramps – that will challenge and develop skiing skills, while making it convenient to hit all these features close to the cabin, without having to ski the entire trail system to find and experience and practice on them. This skills park concept seems to be unique to the region and even the country, as the resources we are finding on developing this area are mainly from Europe. This could be an attraction for regional skiers, families, kids and teams to utilize, and hope it might be the start of encouraging more development of these ski skill development areas at other ski trails in the area and region.

Lakeland/Minocqua Area:

- The area had good skiing this last year, however there was some damage from the recent heavy rains. Repair work is underway, however it will take a while as it is mostly volunteers doing the work.

American Birkebeiner / Hayward Area

- American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation has begun construction on a new Nordic/Community center at the “OO” trailhead in Seeley. Estimated completion date is January 1, 2019.
- A new snow making loop was created at the Birkie start line with the intent of having 1.5-2km of man-made snow by Thanksgiving for the public to ski on and have early season camps.
- On the Birkie Trail, a pedestrian bridge is being constructed over Cty Hwy OO, as well as an under pass under St. Hwy 77 - creating safe crossings of those major roads for trail users.

Rhineland Area

- Rhineland's Northwoods Nordic trails are undergoing summer work and will be ready for skiing on less and less snow as they get smoothed out and reseeded.

Milwaukee Area

- Lapham Peak and Southeast Wisconsin

Southeast Wisconsin had a disappointing 2017/18 cross country skiing season, with less than two weeks of skiing on groomed trails. The bright spot was the manmade snow loops at Lapham Peak, which provided more than ten weeks of continuous skiing on groomed trails. New snowguns and an improved mode of operation allowed for the volunteer snowmakers and the DNR to make 60 percent more snow than previous seasons and to cover about 1.75 kilometers of trail with a two-foot deep blanket of manmade snow. The snowmaking system at Lapham Peak is sponsored by the Friends of Lapham Peak (FLP), in cooperation with the DNR. The new mode of operation involved leadership on the snowmaking activities by the FLP's volunteer snowmakers, with support from DNR.

The Peak Nordic Kids program and the Peak Nordic Middle School and High School ski teams benefited greatly from the manmade snow. These organizations, based at Lapham Peak, continue to provide opportunities for winter recreation to a growing number of youth throughout the region. The Lapham Peak Ski Club and Milwaukee Nordic Ski Club used the



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snowmaking loops for their programs, including lessons open to the public, throughout the season.

The snowmaking loops at Lapham Peak provided the only venue in the region this season for youth and adult cross country ski racing. The seven weekly Wednesday Night races and the Lapham Loppet utilized the snowmaking loops; as did races for the Wisconsin High School and Middle School Ski League.

Planning is underway for expansion of the snowmaking trails at Lapham Peak. Another high capacity snowgun has been ordered, to further increase snowmaking capacity and efficiency. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for snowmaking is being developed between the FLP and the DNR. This will allow for the addition of about 0.75 kilometers of new snowmaking trail on a loop through the woods. The FLP have prepared a Snowmaking Strategic and Business Plan to show the DNR our approach for constructing and operating the system in a financially sustainable way.

The FLP's fundraising initiative for 2017/18 was called the "Penguin Pal Campaign". Skiers were encouraged to purchase a voluntary "trail pass", and given a penguin sticker to show that they were supporting the program. The FLP are planning to expand this initiative for the 2018/19 season by providing more recognition to donors and volunteers. The Penguin Pal Campaign also included a business sponsorship component, with business names and logos displayed on large penguin signs placed along the snowmaking trails.

The DNR is in the process of completing a Recreation Opportunities Analysis (ROA) for the entire state, to be used as guidance for parks planning. The Lapham Peak unit is included in the Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Region. The ROA survey results showed strong support for cross country ski trails in the region.

The draft ROA notes that...

"Cross-country skiing is popular in this area of the state, however the reduced amount of snow the region receives and shorter winter season make it challenging to have quality trails. Outside of snow-making capabilities at Kettle Moraine State Forest-Lapham Peak Unit, skiers depend on adequate snowfall to provide skiing opportunities. Even though the season may be shorter than northern parts of the state, there are many opportunities on department properties to expand groomed trail networks or create new ones."

The ROA recommends adding cross country ski trails in the region. We think this provides little value without adequate snow. A better way for DNR to provide the opportunity for a higher quality cross country skiing experience would be to promote more snowmaking on existing trails such Lapham Peak or other trail systems in the region. John McCarthy - Friends of Lapham Peak

Madison



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- Wisconsin Biathlon-

On the biathlon front in Wisconsin we continue to grow with more opportunities for adults and youth. In addition to our annual race series at Blackhawk, there were four biathlon safety certification classes held over the past year in conjunction with Birkie Biathlon, Blackhawk Ski Club, Bay Nordic Ski Club and Wisconsin Biathlon. The classes were attended by approximately 80 participants that included youth to seasoned masters. Bay Nordic was very instrumental in developing a new biathlon venue at the Reforestation Camp just north of Green Bay where their first race was held on February 12th. This race was part of a Statewide biathlon race series, open to novice and experienced biathletes. The emphasis in the coming years will be to grow youth biathlon opportunities in other parts of the state and develop more coaches and facilities. To accomplish this goal we are working closely with MN biathlon who is also experiencing growth in opportunities and participation. Our current limiting factor for growth, as always, is funding and experienced help. Mark Torresani

Central Cross-Country Skiing (Regional Governing Body under US Ski & Snowboard)

- Youth – 80 schools enrolled in Nordic Rocks for schools Program in WI serving 10,423 students, where 50% of students experienced cross country skiing for the first time.
- Juniors – 47 competitors with National Ranking Race License
- Coaches – 40 US Ski & Snowboard Certified Coaches
- Clubs – 6 clubs have regional/national club memberships and 7 clubs have regional club memberships

Submitted by: Ben Popp

Equestrians

With the slow start to the season - Riding season is in full swing, and trails seem to be getting a lot of use!

American Trails had a great article that Randy shared with the council on sharing the trails, It has been shared with the equine community, with the suggestion to share with their multi use partners.

<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/horses-as-trail-users>

National Equestrian Trails Conference in November in Phoenix AZ I will be attending along with 2 others to bring back information on topics including:

- Growing your organization
- Getting younger people active in your group
- Getting grants to help your group
- Having a voice in legislation
- Work with local and federal agencies to improve your trails
- How to work with other trail users for the benefit of all
- Improving your group's trail experience
- Preserving, protecting and expanding the trails

More info about the conference can be found here <http://sharingthetrails.com/index.html>



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Back Country Horseman of Wisconsin is starting to organize work days at several trails and is gaining momentum. Eue Galle has had several work days and seen some great improvements.

The group also sent several people to the Trails School and are putting their knowledge to great use!

Trails School was a success with 13 students completing the course at Magnolia Bluff County Park. Plans are underway to start the 2019 school.

Wisconsin Horse Council continues to work on a brochure to distill down the important information on the Economic Impact Study done by the American Horse Council.

WHC is also continuing work on the "share the trail" campaign. We have worked through some of the resistance with information, and still have a few areas that we will continue to work with.

Submitted by: Cricket Jewett

ATV/UTV

The Wisconsin ATV UTV Association, working in partnership with the NOHVIS Group, are underway doing Trail Patrol Ambassador re-certification and new ambassador training starting this past April. To date there have been 4 training sessions with a fifth one scheduled in the southwest part of Wisconsin which is taking place this coming September 15th. The training has been incorporating the current ambassador program while updating and integrating into the NexGen updated program, with new highlights and additional tools to help proactively manage our trail networks.

On a different project, it was with great pride to be part of the new trail extension which included a ribbon cutting ceremony that took place recently in Chippewa County. The current trail system of 27 miles added an additional 10 miles of trail network in that region of the state. This is another example where the local ATV UTV community worked with the county, towns, the equestrian group and the Ice Age Trail folks to eventually come up with a layout and system that worked for everyone.

Road route expansions, extensions and in some locations, being used as the primary access method for ATV UTV traffic, continues to evolve. The organization appreciates the working relationship that continues to develop with Bob Fasick and others at WI DOT as all the parties are becoming more aware of the various challenges in dealing with the different layers of government agencies in these endeavors.

With the mid-summer season upon us, the organization has started conducting its regional meetings and rides. The Northeastern Regional took place on July 28 in Oconto County. The Northwestern Regional will be held in Bayfield County on August 18th. The Southern Regional will be taking place on October 27th at a business location in Muscoda, Wisconsin, located in Grant and Iowa Counties. At these settings the WATVA leadership team listens to concerns, challenges and successes within those particular regions of the state. After working through regional issues, statewide topics are discussed to get insights and input on from the clubs / members.



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The organization hosted a statewide strategy session this past May, inviting multiple state agencies, the U.S. Forest Service, Tread Lightly, manufacturers of the ATV UTV equipment, dealerships, and associated businesses such as campgrounds, taverns, restaurants and the like. At these settings the organization brings up pertinent issues and problems it deems as important, asking insights, assistance and ideas to help adjust and better manage this recreational industry.

WATVA also continues communicating and sharing ideas and concerns with the Wisconsin Conservation Congress motorized committee <WCC>. Our organization invited WCC to our upcoming VIP Ride taking place in Adams County / Town of Rome on Friday, September 7th. WATVA was likewise invited to their committee meeting taking place on September 8th. A special note here, all State Trails Council members are invited to join us at the September 7th VIP Ride, taking place at the Dyracuse Park.

Ongoing work and communications continue in Langlade County with ongoing efforts to get a recreational bridge in place over the Wolf River, running parallel with the existing highway bridge. Other collaborative efforts further north, working through the variance process and implementation plans of forest roads in the NH-AL and connecting communities.

WATVA continues to assist in local club start ups, the momentum and interest continues growing in parts of the state previously not very active in this kind of request. This newer effort seems to be related to interest in route connections, with efforts to find private property land base later on.

Submitted by: Randy Harden

Snowmobile

Wisconsin snowmobilers attended the 50th International Snowmobile Congress (ISC), held this year in Nova Scotia in June.

Recognition was given to one of Wisconsin's own as the American Council of Snowmobile Associations Snowmobiler of the year. 51st^h ISC will be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan in June 2019.

July 14th the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC) held its Summer Directors Meeting to conduct regular AWSC business and to pick this year's "Of the Year" award winners.

2018"of the Year" winners are ---

- *Groomer* – Steve Wolfe from Arbor Vitae
- *Snowmobiler* – Bev Dittmar from Eagle River
- *Young Snowmobiler* – Zach Makela from Brule
- *Family* – Jay Thompson and family from New Franken
- *Dealer* – Rob's Performance – from Johnson Creek



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- *Club* (1st time) – Red Arrow (who is also celebrating their 50 year Anniversary this year) from Townsend
- The 42nd Annual World Championship Watercross was held in Grantsburg, WI on the 22nd of July.
- Governor's Snowmobile Recreational Council will be meeting in the Wausau area on August 29th.
- The 52nd "Official Start of Winter"- Haydays Grass Drags- will be held September 8 and 9 in North branch, MN, Just across the border.
- The AWSC is planning the Fall Workshops for October. Scheduled topics are:
 - *Snowmobile Friendly Community*
 - *Tax Workshop*
 - *Trail Side First Aid*
 - *Grooming Management*
 - *County Grants/Landowner Agreements*
 - *Membership 101*
 - *DNR Safety Recertification*

THINK SNOW!

Submitted by: Douglas Johnson

Four-Wheel Drive

In regard to the Recreation Opportunity Analysis the Four Wheel Drive Community (4WDC) is thankful for the recognition on different levels of this, however, still has a real concern on the lack of recognition of Four Wheel Driving included in the actual initial verbiage of Motorized Vehicles and fear that they will be overlooked in the process.

A coalition of various main 4WD groups in Wisconsin are now holding off on working on potentially establishing legislation for 4WD until after this busy summer is behind us.

No further update on a 4WD Park.

There are some significant events for the public that have occurred. This includes the Fun on the Farm that was held June 15-17 at Frontenac Farms hosted by W4WDA which didn't have a real good turnout due to very heavy rain and hail and extreme heat. Also, the Northwoods Jeep Jamboree was held July 12-14 at Mole Lake by Titledown Jeepers. Also, the Great Northern Trail Ride is being held



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this weekend at Apple Valley hosted by WOHVA. There are some other larger events hosted by private land owners throughout the year.

One of the big issues recognized is how to get the “virtual social media individuals and clubs” involved and also to take responsibility for their actions.

Several clubs are doing training programs/clinics to show new and more seasoned 4WD enthusiasts how to use and/or improve driving their vehicle in a proper and environmental manner and use of various accessories. One such clinic was held in the Madison area that was very well received to the point that there is more demand than can be filled.

In the FWDC there are different groups continuing to work on various private properties for trails. Some of these are becoming very successful!!

A new association called RL4WDA (Road Legal 4 Wheel Drive Association) has formed and is currently establishing a membership that includes both individuals and clubs with some private properties available at certain times and also will have an insurance available for clubs through the membership.

We need public lands that have roads/trails available to the public WHEN the public wishes to ride and they need the knowledge of WHERE these public roads/trails are. This can be accomplished by moving forward more timely on the inventorying, classifying and mapping of “roads” on State properties with the hopes that counties will follow. This would be a definite service for many citizens of Wisconsin and would also increase tourism here in Wisconsin for those who wish to visit this beautiful state with their Four Wheel Drive.

This year many of the Wisconsin FWDC have used their vacation to go four wheel driving in many states even as far as California giving them tourist dollars with very little reciprocal 4 wheel driving tourist dollars coming to Wisconsin.

A new term I have heard recently is Four Wheel Drive Touring. Some four wheel drive folks did an on paved, gravel and some dirt touring event with some dual sport motorcyclists this last Memorial Day weekend that was apparently quite fun, but very little need to put into four wheel drive. I mention this to show the need for all levels of usage of very low intensity up to what is usually seen on most media events of very high intensity with the middle of the road of these two being the most desirable.

Submitted by: Luana Schneider

Hiking

Both the Ice Age Trail Alliance and the North Country Trail Association in Wisconsin have been hitting the trails hard with building new trails, repairing storm damaged trails and on going trail maintenance. With all of the work that needs to be done they still find time to have fun with volunteer appreciation events and guided hikes for general public.



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June 02, 2018 was National Trails Day and was organized by American Hiking Society. For 25 years, National Trails Day® has united the trails community on the first Saturday of June with the goal of connecting more people to trails and public lands. In 2018, American Hiking Society set a target goal to improve 2,802 miles of trail to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System, and the public enthusiastically rallied to improve trails from coast to coast. In a momentous effort, 3,954 miles of trails were improved in a single day!

American Hiking Society invited hikers, cyclists, equestrians, paddlers, and everyone else who enjoys spending time outside to join the nationwide efforts by pledging to improve a trail on National Trails Day®. Participants built and maintained more than 750 miles of trail and picked up trash along thousands of additional miles of trail! 1,203 Events across all 50 states with 108,947 people participating. 24,192 volunteers built or maintained trails at a volunteer labor value of \$2,658,100.

Beyond trail work projects, hundreds of individuals and organizations hosted communitywide festivals and outdoor recreation opportunities on National Trails Day®. It was a great opportunity for people to try something new, explore wild spaces, or get outside right in their neck of the woods—or city. (<https://americanhiking.org/blog/3954-miles-of-trail-improved-on-national-trails-day-2/>). The Ice Age Trail Alliance hosted (7) National Trails Day events across the state and the North Country Trail Association – Wisconsin hosted events across the northern portion of the state.

The North Country Trail was hit hard by the June 16-17 storms that left a wide path of damage and 13” of rain across northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The Rainbow Lakes Wilderness portion of the NCT in the Chequamegon National Forest remains closed due to flooding and storm damage. A temporary road walk detour has been established.

The Ice Age Trail Alliance is celebrating 60 years of its commitment to the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, creating, supporting and protecting a thousand-mile footpath tracing Ice Age formations across Wisconsin. Ice Age Trail Days is a Mammoth multi-day celebration is taking place in Cross Plains August 8 -12 with a Mobile Skills Crews Trail Building project near Cross Plain, a large For to Table Community Dinner on Friday 8/10 as well as hikes and workshops.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) a critical source of funding for land acquisition for both the Ice Age Trail and the North Country Trail is set to expire on September 30, 2018, unless Congress renews this vital funding source. The Ice Age Trail Alliance has worked tirelessly toward completion of a contiguous Trail through Wisconsin. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been indispensable to that effort, investing more than \$14.5M in permanently protecting the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. In 2017, the IATA was able to protect just one mile of Trail. The slowdown in Ice Age Trail Alliance acquisitions can be tied directly to Congress's failure to permanently secure the Land and Water Conservation Fund. LWCF is now inching toward expiration. The fund was temporarily extended for three years in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, and will expire September 30, 2018.

The continual siphoning off of its designated funding to other purposes has created a backlog of unmet conservation needs across the country. The lack of long-term stability for LWCF is a major



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obstacle to our continued work to protect and maintain the Trail. (<https://www.iceagetrail.org/save-the-lwcf/>).

Submitted by: Ken Neitzke

Off-highway motorcycles

Off-highway motorcyclists are enjoying the riding opportunities the summer allows. A regional adventure motorcycle rally is scheduled in August at Boulder Junction in northern Wisconsin. We have a single track motorcycle trail under construction on public land in Vilas County. The trail is being constructed in phases. The first loop, which is also friendly to people new to trail riding, will be open this August. Follow on phases in coming years will include additional and more challenging loops. Prior to undertaking this project, we sent some of the people involved with the project to a trail construction and design training course to ensure that best practices were followed with this project. We recently got approval to begin a single track motorcycle trail project at the motorized recreation park in Tigerton. We will be forming a local club to support this project. Organized dual sport motorcycle events are in high demand with some rides selling out very quickly. A popular ride based in Forest County sold out in less than 24 hours. Two additional dual sport rides in southern WI scheduled for later this fall are expected to fill up quickly as well as they have in the past. One sold out in 12 hours last year. There is a weekend trail ride scheduled along the MN/WI border for September. This ride involves repurposing existing MN horse trails for a weekend of off-highway motorcycle riding. Repurposing provides an excellent opportunity for motorcyclists and the contributions the motorcyclists make to maintaining the trail and grounds is very helpful to the equestrians that the trails are principally designated for. The administrative code project required to support the off-highway motorcycle program continues a statement of scope being presented to the Natural Resources Board for their consideration in August. The code enables us to spend the money we collect from riders for OHM stickers to support the program and trail projects while also addressing other issues beyond what is covered in the statute. Like several other motorized recreation programs, the OHM program is designed to be self-supporting. Riders are already looking ahead to winter when off-road riding converts to ice riding on frozen waters around the state.

This is the new motorcycle trail in Vilas County that opens this August 9 weekend:
<https://www.facebook.com/LandoverDualSporters/videos/1725121494201657/>

Submitted by: Bryan Much